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THE THIRTEENTH GENERAL CENSUS

Uncle Sam About to Ask Questions of His Family.

TO GET AT THE ACTUAL FACTS

Taking the Decennial Census a Tremendous Undertaking and a Colossal Expense, but Necessary to the Proper Conduct of Our Vast Domain.

OLD Dr. U. S. Census will begin making his thirteenth diagnosis of the condition of Uncle Sam and his family April 15 next. He made the first in 1790 and has been repeating it every ten years since. Uncle Sam has footed the bills, to date amounting to about \$47,000,000. Our venerable dad has calculated that the thirteenth investigation will cost about \$13,000,000, so that when old Dr. U. S. Census finishes his current work there will have been spent about \$60,000,000 for this purpose since 1790.

The twelfth census cost about \$13,000,000, and as Uncle Sam's landed



DIRECTOR E. DANA DURAND.

possessions have increased since then and his family gained about 15,000,000 more members than belonged to it in 1900. It would be considered no more than fair if the present diagnosis were to call for the spending of about \$19,000,000, which would be the sum if the rate of increase of expense at each census up to the twelfth were to be maintained for the thirteenth.

A census expert has estimated that of the \$13,000,000 the headquarters office force will earn \$4,800,000, the enumerators \$4,500,000, the supervisors \$910,000 and the special agents \$700,000. The administrative cost will be \$300,000, the stationery \$200,000, rent \$125,000, tabulating machines \$250,000, cards for tabulation processes \$100,000, printing \$800,000, Alaska \$85,000, Porto Rico \$160,000; total, \$12,930,000.

If that is all the expense it is cheap. The late General Francis A. Walker, who was a census authority greater than any other, living or dead, once wrote that "the people of the United States can afford to pay for the very best census they can get." He pointed this in connection with a frank confession of his own shortsightedness in underestimating the cost of the tenth census.

It's the old story—when you are ill get the best doctor you can afford. The comparative cheapness with which the thirteenth census will be taken will be largely due to Director E. Dana Durand's economical methods, to the introduction of semiautomatic electrical card punching, tabulating and sorting machines and to the inheritance of wisdom from the experience gained by the permanent census bureau.

Modern Methods For Accuracy.

Mr. Durand is responsible for many of the new methods to increase statistical accuracy at every step of the census taking and to decrease the per capita cost of the enumeration. The card punching, tabulating and sorting machinery is the invention of a census mechanical expert, and the patent rights belong to Uncle Sam. The machines are novel in plan and design, are of greater speed and efficiency than those they superseded and can be built and operated at a large saving of money as compared with previous expenditures for this purpose.

Other money saving features are the elimination of the vital statistics inquiry from the work of the decennial census, as it belongs to the permanent branch of the United States census; the reduction in the number of schedules, the piece price method of paying for machine work, the omission of the hand, household and neighborhood industries from the manufactures branch of the census and the reduction of the size and number of copies of the final reports.

The larger part of the \$13,000,000 will be expended in the fiscal year which began July 1 last and ends June 30, 1910, the first of the three years within which time the thirteenth census must be over, the temporary clerks and special agents discharged and the permanent census bureau with its office force of 700 clerks again performing its annual intercessal functions. Fully half of the total to be expended will be Washington's share,

and the remainder will be distributed all over the country.

Congress has limited the thirteenth census to four general subjects—population, agriculture, manufactures and mines and quarries. The director is authorized to determine the form and subdivision of inquiries. The inquiry as to population relates to April 15, 1910; that as to agriculture concerns the farm operations during 1909 and calls for an inventory of farm equipment April 15, 1910; that relative to manufactures and mines and quarries is for 1909.

An Army to Get the Facts.

The enumerators will carry only the population and agriculture schedules April 15, 1910. Special agents will be sent out with the schedules for the manufactures, mines and quarries data. There will be fully 65,000 enumerators, of whom about 45,000 will carry both the population and agriculture schedules, as it is estimated that there are now fully 7,000,000 separate farms in America, with farmers numbering well up into a score of millions. In 1900 there were many more billions of dollars of fixed capital invested in agriculture than there were in manufactures, strange as it may seem. And the farmer is getting better off all the time; his mortgage indebtedness is decreasing fast, his taxation is small as compared with the urbanite's burden, and he has taken to automobile riding on a large scale.

This is the heyday of the farmer, and old Dr. U. S. Census is going to diagnose him pretty carefully for fear that with ease comes evil—that is, the neglect of those essentials which have made his prosperity possible.

Census taking every ten years is a tremendous task. It is the greatest single operation undertaken by Uncle Sam with the exception of the Panama canal work and the assembling of an army in time of war. The American census is the largest, costliest and most accurate of any taken by the civilized nations. Its methods are the most modern and its equipment the most complete. The census bureau force comprises, first, Director E. Dana Durand of Michigan, who, although only thirty-eight years old, is older than most of the generals commanding the forces in the civil war and who is, too, a statistically scarred hero, a veteran in government service and likely to prove the most practical and efficient director connected with any of the past censuses. Then there is the assistant director, William F. Willoughby of Washington, former secretary of state of Porto Rico. Next in rank are the five chief statisticians—William C. Hunt, in charge of the population division; Le Grand Powers, heading the agricultural division; William M. Stewart, overseeing the manufactures division; Dr. Cressy L. Wilbur, the vital statistics work, and Dr. Joseph Adna Hill, the division of revision and results. Charles S. Sloane is the geographer, Alburus H. Baldwin is the chief clerk, Voler V. Viles is chief of the publication division, Hugh M. Brown is private secretary to the director, Robert M. Pindell, Jr., is the appointment clerk, George Johannes is the disbursing officer, and C. W. Spicer is the mechanical expert. In addition to these are the chiefs of the divisions under the chief statisticians.

There are about 750 permanent clerks, and there will be 3,000 temporary clerks, etc. The supervisors will number 330, and they will employ and direct the 65,000 enumerators. Twenty expert special agents will exercise an advisory function. There will be about 1,600 chief special agents and assistant special agents. The supervisors will also probably employ 1,000 clerks, 500 special agents and 4,000 interpreters.

Tabulating the Returns.

The preparation of the schedules for the tabulating process will begin as soon as they are forwarded by the supervisors. The data on them relating to population will be transferred to manila cards by the punching of holes in them to correspond with the different items in the schedules. An electrical machine controlled by a clerk can punch holes in 3,000 cards a day. There will be 300 of these, and 90,000,000 cards have been ordered.

After the punching the cards are hand fed into an electric tabulating machine with a "pin box" attachment.



CENSUS TABULATING MACHINE.

which permits the required plus to pass through the variously placed holes in the cards, in this way establishing an electric circuit, resulting in the tabulation of the items on counters which register their results in printing on spooled paper somewhat like a stock ticker. There will be a hundred of these machines. After certain comparisons to prove accuracy the schedules are permanently preserved in a great iron safe in the census bureau. As the card does not contain the name of the person for whom it stands, all personal identity is eliminated from the cards. All danger of misuse of such information disappears. Severe penalties are provided in case any employee discloses census information to outsiders. The next step is the making of the maps and tables to accompany the analyses and then finally the issue of the printed bulletins and reports. Before July 1, 1912, the work must be over and the thirteenth census gone to join its scientific ancestors.



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